


WILLINGBORO POLICE DEPARTMENT				
Standard Operating Procedure				
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SUBJECT: Body Worn Cameras (BWC)				
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BY THE ORDER OF: Gregory Rucker, Director of Public Safety			2/25/2015 – p. 4, III, G p. 7, VII, C	
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PURPOSE: The Purpose of this Policy is to establish the procedures for the use, maintenance, and control of the Willingboro Township Police Department's Body Worn Cameras (BWCs). The department uses the BWCs for the purpose of recording video and audio accounts of specific events. The Willingboro Township Police Department recognizes that audio and video captured may not accurately reflect the perception of the officer wearing the BWC. The technology utilized in the BWC cannot exactly mimic the physiology of an officer at this time. An officer turning his or her head, focusing his or her vision on a particular object, or experiencing auditory exclusion might observe something not captured in audio or video recordings, or an officer might NOT observe something that is captured in audio or video recordings. The use and maintenance of video recordings can be invaluable to law enforcement for both training and evidential purposes. Proper safeguards need to be in effect which will ensure their non-discriminating use as well as the proper preservation of evidence, which may be obtained through use of the technology. The purpose of the BWC program does not include capturing audio and/or video recordings of officers' private conversations, strategy or information sharing sessions, meal breaks, and/or tactical preparations.

POLICY: It is the policy of the Willingboro Township Police Department that all sworn members comply with the following procedures for the use and maintenance of the BWCs. This policy will cover any recordings of video and audio as a result of the use of the BWC.

PROCEDURE:

I. Definitions

A. Activate: Actuate the recording button the BWC

B. Body Worn Camera (BWC): Audio/Video recording equipment designed to be worn on an officer's person that makes an electronic audio/video recording of activities that take place during any law enforcement action.

II. Authorized Use

- A. The Willingboro Township Police Department has adopted the use of BWCs in order to accomplish the legitimate police objectives, including but not limited to:
1. Accurately document events, actions, conditions and statements made during motor vehicle stops, investigative stops, field interviews, arrests and critical incidents;
 2. To enhance officer reports, evidence collection and courtroom testimony;
 3. To enhance this agency's ability to review facts leading to probable cause for arrest, arrest/search/seizure procedures/techniques, officer/public interaction, and evidence for investigative purposes;
 4. Evaluation of officers performance to ensure compliance with Willingboro Township Police Department directives, rules and regulations;
 5. To review extraordinary incidents, with both positive and negative outcomes, for training purposes.
- B. The BWC will be worn on the outer most garment worn by both uniformed and non-uniformed officers. It will be secured to the uniform using the uniform mount/clip supplied by TASER was part of the BWC equipment. The BWC will be positioned high on the center of the chest at badge level.
- C. If a BWC is not functioning properly, it will be taken out of service until the unit is repaired. Any officer with a malfunctioning BWC will turn the unit over to the Deputy Watch Commander along with a Special Report describing the malfunction and how it was discovered. If the unit is damaged, the officer will include an explanation, to the best of his or her knowledge, of how and when the damage occurred. The Deputy Watch Commander will deliver the malfunctioning/damaged unit and the Special Report to the Watch Commander before the end of the tour.
- D. If a BWC is lost, the assigned officer will notify the Deputy Watch Commander. The Deputy Watch Commander will make immediate notification to the Watch Commander.
- E. All uniformed officers will be required to utilize BWC's in accordance with this policy. No uniformed officer will be excused from using a BWC unless specifically approved by the Director of Public Safety or designee. The officer is responsible for utilizing the techniques taught to them during the BWC training to ensure that the BWC is operating properly at the start of their tour of duty. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.
- F. Detectives and Officers in a plain clothes assignment while not required to wear a BWC at all times will deploy and activate their BWC whenever they have previous knowledge that they will be engaging in any of the activities outlined in Section II, paragraph G of this policy. At all other times the BWC should be deployed and activated when reasonably feasible.

G. The BWC will be used to record the following events:

1. All calls for service.
2. Officer-initiated vehicle and/or pedestrian stops.
3. When an individual is being taken into custody.
4. Any police response which involves the use of emergency warning lights and/or siren.
 - a. The BWC will be activated before the emergency lights and siren are activated.
 - b. The BWC will not be deactivated until the officer completes their assignment at the location or as outlined in Section IV of this policy.
5. During field sobriety tests.
6. Crime(s) in progress.
7. Documenting serious accidents, crime scenes or fires.
8. While handling disabled motor vehicles.
9. While transporting prisoners.
10. Responding to/investigation of Police Deadly Force incidents
11. Responding to domestic disputes.
12. Responding to neighborhood disputes.
13. Responding to noise complaints.
14. Responding to disorderly conduct.
15. Responding to suspicious persons/vehicles.
16. Responding to riots or civil disturbances.
17. Responding to protests.
18. K-9 Incidents, except during explosive searches.
19. All SWAT Operations.
20. When administering Miranda Warnings in the field.
21. During all Searches.
22. All mutual aid calls.

It should be recognized that the above is not an exhaustive or all-inclusive list and that officers should activate the BWC during any situation or encounter they feel would be beneficial in the performance of their duties. Use of the BWC during operations conducted by members of the Willingboro Police Street Crimes Unit will be done so at the discretion of the CID Commander or designee.

- H. It is not necessary to advise a suspect, or bystander that the incident is being recorded; however, a confrontational subject may alter his or her demeanor when they learn they are being recorded. Officers are encouraged to reveal that a recording is being made when they believe it will de-escalate a confrontational or hostile situation.
- I. When entering a person's residence Officers shall notify the person(s) with whom the officer is conversing that the BWC is activated unless it is unsafe or infeasible to do so. The officer shall document in their written report and by narration on the BWC the reason for any decision not to make notification of BWC activation.
- J. Officers shall notify victims and witnesses that a recording is being made and gain their consent prior to initiating an interview. The consent will be documented by recording it with the BWC. The consent will be requested using language substantially similar to, "I am recording this incident. Is it alright with you if I continue recording while you tell me what happened?"

1. The officer shall not suggest to the person that the BWC be de-activated nor shall they ask if the person prefers that the BWC be de-activated. The request for de-activation must be initiated by the victim/witness.
 2. It may not be immediately apparent to an officer which subjects are witnesses, victims, suspects, or unrelated by-standers. Officers will keep the BWCs activated while they determine what role each person took in the incident. Officers are not expected to make a positive determination of what each person's role was prior to conducting interviews, so the standard will be reasonable belief based on the available evidence.
 3. When de-activating the BWC at the request of a victim/witness/civilian, the conversation between the officer and the subject making the request shall be electronically recorded using the BWC. The officer shall narrate the reason for the de-activation using language similar to "I am deactivating my BWC at the request of the victim." The officer shall also document the circumstances for the de-activation in any investigation or incident report. The officer shall notify their supervisor of the circumstances surrounding the de-activation as soon as is practicable.
 4. If an officer declines a request to deactivate the BWC, the officer shall immediately notify the subject of the decision not to deactivate the recording. The officer shall document the reason for their decision to decline the request and shall notify their supervisor as soon as is practicable. The officer is prohibited from misleading the subject into believing the recording has been stopped.
 5. If the subject being interviewed is both a victim and a suspect (e.g. mutual fight), the BWC will remain activated while they are being interviewed and their consent is not necessary.
 6. BWCs will be reactivated at the conclusion of the victim/witness interview, unless the interview is the last action taken by officers.
- K. If asked whether the Officer is equipped with a BWC and/or if the device is activated, the officer shall answer truthfully unless the County Prosecutor or designee has expressly authorized the officer to make a covert recording.

III. Officer Responsibilities

- A. Officers will be given training in the use, maintenance, and handling of the BWC. An officer's failure to care for an assigned BWC in accordance with this training may result in disciplinary action.
- B. Intentional damage to or loss of a BWC will result in disciplinary action. Damage to or loss of a BWC will be reported and investigated in accordance with the Internal Affairs policy. If the damage or loss is determined to be the result of recklessness the responsible officer may be disciplined, but an officer will not face disciplinary action for accidental or unavoidable damage or loss.
- C. Officers will prepare the deployment of the BWC at the start of their shift, as well as secure it at the end of their shift, in accordance with their training and departmental policy.

- D. If any of the BWC's functions do not operate properly at any time during the shift, the officer will immediately notify the Deputy Watch Commander and follow the procedure described in section II-B of this policy.
- E. Officers should ensure that the equipment is operating in a way which will allow for the recording of enforcement actions. No uniform pieces or equipment, including ties, shirts, and jackets, will be worn in a manner that will interfere with video and/or audio recording of incidents.
- F. Officers are encouraged to notify the Deputy Watch Commander after recording an incident or encounter that will provide valuable training if reviewed by other officers.
- G. Officers should assign videos to a category, in Evidence.com, that are evidentiary in nature and/or they feel are pertinent to any investigation(s). All the videos from the officer(s) associated with the incident and/or investigation should be assigned a category.
 - 1. At a minimum the officer(s) will categorize their video as "Evidence." The officer(s) may also categorize that same video with any of the other options that apply to that video. For example, use of force, complaint, arrest, traffic stop, etc.
 - 2. The officer will also ID the video(s) with the full incident number given to them from Central Communications. It will contain the year and then the eight numbers that follow. An example of this is 2015-00001234. If there are multiple videos, the officer(s) will still ID each video with the full incident number given to them from Central Communications.
- H. Officers shall categorize videos that capture any of the following circumstances that are deemed "special privacy" issues by the Attorney General:
 - 1. Victim of a Criminal Offense
 - 2. Image of a Child
 - 3. Inside a Residential Premise
 - 4. At a School or Youth Facility
 - 5. Inside a Health Care or Medical Facility
 - 6. Inside a Drug Treatment Center
 - 7. Inside a place of Worship
 - 8. A subject whose request to deactivate the BWC was declined

The videos will at a minimum be categorized in the "Special Privacy" category in Evidence.com, but does not prevent an officer from assigning a video to multiple categories. Videos falling into this category must be tagged by the end of the Officers next shift.

- I. Officers assigned to the SWAT Team who deploy their cameras during Tactical Operations shall assign those videos to the "Special Operations" category in Evidence.com. Officers participating in a Tactical Operation whose BWC captures the movements and techniques of the SWAT Team may be directed to categorize those videos in the "Special Operations" category at the discretion of the SWAT Team Commander or their designee.
 - J. Anyone accessing any video for any purpose (i.e. report preparation, Administrative Review, etc.) shall document, in the "Notes" box under the
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video, the date, purpose for viewing the video, their initials and badge number. The officer will then “Post” the note so as to record the entry into the audit trail in Evidence.com for that particular video.

IV. Activation and Deactivation

A. BWC's will only be used in the performance of Official Duties and for the purposes of recording incidents, investigations and police-civilian encounters involving those law enforcement activities specified in this policy.

B. The BWC equipment used by the department has a pre-record function. Once the recording begins, the system maintains a thirty second video-only buffer that is recorded to memory when the unit is activated.

C. Officers will activate their BWCs when:

1. Upon commencing response to a call for service; or
2. Observing a violation or incident for which the officer intends to take action, the officer will immediately activate the BWC.
3. An officer is injured on duty.
4. An officer is involved in a motor vehicle accident.

The BWC will be activated by all officers responding to the scene of an incident, whether acting as the primary investigator or in a back-up officer capacity.

D. The BWC shall not be deactivated until the enforcement action or encounter is completed unless one of the following conditions apply:

1. The officer has no contact with any victim, witness, suspect, or other principal and the camera is not in any position to record any relevant part of the incident.
2. The officer has received supervisory permission to stop recording.
3. A victim or witness does not consent to being recorded during an interview. The BWC will be used to record the incident preceding and following the victim/witness interview(s).
4. Prior to deactivating the BWC, officers shall record their intention to deactivate along with the reason for the deactivation.
5. In the event that citizen contact is re-established or an interview with a victim/witness is concluded the BWC will be reactivated.
6. Officers may cease recording when they are not in direct contact with a victim, witness, suspect, or bystander AND/OR they are conferring on a tactical or investigative strategy. While the BWC is deactivated, the BWC on another officer not involved in the strategy meeting must continue recording to ensure

the entire incident is documented. Officers deactivating their BWC for this purpose shall narrate the circumstances for the deactivation using language substantially similar to "I am turning off my BWC to discuss strategy with my supervisor." All officers involved in the strategy meeting will reactivate their BWCs at the conclusion of the meeting.

- E. All Officers responding to and/or arriving at the scene of Police Deadly Force incident shall activate their BWC prior to arriving at the scene. While at the scene of or during the on-scene investigation of a Police Deadly Force incident the officer shall not deactivate their BWC unless instructed to do so by the assistant prosecutor, deputy attorney general or their designee supervising the investigation of the incident.
- F. Deactivation may occur when specifically authorized to do so by an assistant prosecutor or deputy attorney general. When deactivating the BWC the officer shall narrate the purpose for the deactivation using language substantially similar to "I am now turning off my BWC at the direction of assistant prosecutor (insert name)."
- G. Officers will activate the BWC before transporting prisoners, suspects, victims, or witnesses and will not deactivate the BWC until the transport is complete. In cases where officers are transporting prisoners the deactivation shall not take place until the prisoner is secured inside the facility they are being transported to.
- H. BWC deactivation may occur during non-enforcement activities such as protecting accident scenes, directing traffic, etc. The BWC will be immediately reactivated at the commencement of any violent, confrontational, argumentative, or accusatory interaction.
- I. When an unforeseen physical confrontation or other dangerous situation occurs at a time when an officer would not normally be required to have his or her BWC activated, the officer will activate the BWC as soon as they can SAFELY do so. Officers are not authorized to jeopardize their own safety in order to activate their BWC.
- J. Failing to activate the BWC or any deactivation of the BWC during an incident, regardless of whether or not the decision is justified, must be documented in the officer's report along with an explanation for the failure to activate or deactivation.
- K. Violations of policy will be reviewed by the Supervisor to determine if discipline is necessary.

V. Restrictions

- A. Notwithstanding Section II; paragraph G and Section IV; paragraph E of this policy, unless actively engaged in the investigation of a criminal offense, responding to an emergency or the officer reasonably believes they will be required to use constructive authority or force, the officer will not activate or shall deactivate their BWC while:
 - 1) In a school/youth facility or on school/youth facility property under circumstances where minor children would be in view of the BWC;

- 2) In a patient care area of a health facility, medical office or substance abuse facility where patients would be in view of the BWC;
- 3) In places of worship under circumstances where worshipers would be in view if the BWC.

If an officer is required to deactivate their BWC under these circumstances, they shall narrate the reason or the deactivation.

- B. In the event that a BWC captures the image of a patient in a substance abuse treatment facility the County Prosecutor or designee shall be notified to ensure compliance with all federal laws and regulations providing for the confidentiality of substance abuse treatment information. The recording shall not be released or accessed without permission of the County Prosecutor or designee.
- C. Activation of a BWC is authorized when a person making a report at the front desk or in the processing room when a citizen or arrestee becomes confrontational, argumentative, accusatory or violent toward the officer or the officer feels it would be beneficial to the performance of their duty.
- D. BWCs shall not be used to make recordings in places where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy (e.g. bathrooms, locker rooms, etc.) while not on the performance of their official duties.
- E. The BWC must be deactivated during any conversations with registered confidential informants or during the recruitment of such confidential sources.
- F. Any officer working in an undercover capacity will not be required to wear a BWC
- G. Officers should avoid capturing video recordings of other officers that are working in an undercover capacity.
- H. The BWC shall not be activated in a courtroom during court proceedings, unless the officer is responding to a call for service or the activation is expressly authorized by the judge.
- I. BWC's shall be deactivated and removed from areas where electronic breath testing is actively taking place.

VI. Data Security and Access Control

- A. All BWC recordings will be maintained on the secure servers.
- B. All BWC data uploads will be done using the docking stations.
- C. The Director of Public Safety, Division Commanders, Watch Commanders, and Deputy Watch Commanders will have access to view all BWC recordings.
- D. When officers capture video on their BWC that they believe contains evidence that is likely to aid in a criminal prosecution or in a civil action brought against the Willingboro Police Department, they will assign the video to the "evidence"

category in the Evidence.com database. Officers will also make an entry into the BEAST evidence management system indicating that the video is to be included in evidence with the case.

- E. If an officer(s) is involved in a shooting or any event that involves serious bodily injury (SBI) the Sergeant on duty will secure the BWC of all officer(s) involved. The BWC will be secured after the scene has been secured and any medical attention is rendered. The BWC will be held as evidence and it will be handled in the same manner as a duty firearm.
- F. Authorized system administrators will have access to the BWC recordings for the purpose of system maintenance.
- G. Videos not being held as evidence may be used for training with the approval of a Watch Commander or designee. The recording must be edited so that the identity of the individuals depicted cannot be determined by those viewing the recording unless the depicted individuals have consented to the recording being used for training.
- H. Videos being held as evidence can only be used for training purposes with approval from the CID Commander or designee. The recording must be edited so that the identity of the individuals depicted cannot be determined by those viewing the recording unless the depicted individuals have consented to the recording being used for training.
- I. Officers authorized to have access to Evidence.com will be issued a unique username and password
 - 1. Officers are only authorized to review videos of their own actions for the purposes of preparing reports and evaluating personal performance;
 - 2. With permission of their supervisor Officers may request to view videos of other officers directly involved with their investigation
 - 3. After completing a BWC video review session, the officer will log out from their account so that no one else may access the system under their username.
 - 4. Officers are not permitted to delete and/or edit the video itself. Intentional attempts to do so will be reported and investigated in accordance with the Internal Affairs Policy.
- J. No recordings taken from BWCs will be distributed or displayed to a member of the public without the authorization of the supervisor in command of the records bureau.
- K. Review of videos with a member of the public for internal affairs purposes requires the authorization of the CID Commander or designee.

VII. Release of BWC video/audio recordings.

- A. All BWC recording releases will be in accordance with applicable laws pertaining to evidence and the Open Public Release Act (OPRA)

- B. The supervisor of the records bureau shall, within one business day of the receipt of a subpoena, court order or request pursuant to OPRA, provide notice to the County Prosecutor. The notice shall clearly state the deadline by which a response must be made.
- C. The supervisor assigned to the records bureau shall be responsible for the release of such video recordings.
- D. The Supervisor assigned to the records bureau shall notify the Director of Public Safety upon request and prior to release of such video recordings.

VIII. Quality assurance

- A. To ensure quality, BWC recordings will be subject to review and monitoring. Watch Commanders and Deputy Watch Commanders will be responsible for reviewing and monitoring BWC recordings to ensure compliance with policies and identify deficiencies that can be addressed with training and take any appropriate corrective action/discipline. Due to time constraints, it is impossible for Watch Commanders and Deputy Watch Commanders to watch every video generated by BWCs, but Deputy Watch Commanders will ensure that at least one video from every officer under their command is reviewed each month. Watch Commanders will make periodic reviews based on necessity and availability.
- B. Supervisors or authorized system administrators will assign any videos with no name assigned to it. Officers must notify their immediate supervisor when they capture video that does not have their name assigned to it.
- C. Watch Commanders must assign all videos involving incidents subject to an Administrative Review to a category during that review and prior to forwarding the Administrative Review to Internal Affairs.

IX. Retention

- A. All videos will be retained for at least ninety (90) days.
- B. BWC recordings pertaining to a criminal investigation or otherwise records information that may be subject to discovery in a prosecution shall be treated as evidence and kept in accordance with the retention period for evidence in a criminal prosecution.
- C. BWC recordings that capture an arrest that did not result in an ongoing prosecution or records the use of police force shall be kept at least until the expiration of the statute of limitations for filing a civil complaint against the officer and/or agency
- D. BWC recordings of an incident that is the subject of an internal affairs complaint shall be kept pending the final resolution of the IA investigation and any resulting administrative action.